



Summary

The Golden Gate National Recreation Area, in cooperation with the Marin County Department of Public Works, is implementing interim measures to reduce flooding on Pacific Way and reduce sedimentation in Redwood Creek. The project includes removal of log jams, partial excavation of accumulated sediment from the creek along Pacific Way and excavation of a small channel near the mouth of the creek to facilitate sediment removal. The project is intended to reduce flooding on Pacific Way and to preserve and improve habitat for native fish.

Need for the Project

Since the early 1900’s, Redwood Creek and its floodplain at Muir Beach have been extensively modified by human activities. These modifications have led to sedimentation in the creek. Over the past several years alone, approximately 5 feet of sediment has accumulated in the creek channel, causing flooding of Pacific Way and threatening the stability of the creek.

- The purpose of this project is to:
- Reduce flooding on Pacific Way during and following winter storms
 - Remove barriers in the creek that have contributed to the build-up of sediment in the channel
 - Prevent the creek from abandoning its current channel and "jumping" to the pasture on the south side of the levee road.

Threats to the Creek

Historically, the entire area of Muir Beach and the adjacent lowland pastures was part of the Redwood Creek floodplain. The creek meandered across the valley floor and, during floods, deposited sediment across the broad floodplain area. Today, the creek has been confined and much of its floodplain has been eliminated due to the combined effects of road and levee construction, channeling projects, and placement of the NPS parking lot and picnic area.

In the late 1990's, a series of severe storms brought large loads of sediment and debris from the upper watershed to the lower creek, filling the channel. Since that time, Redwood Creek has flooded under even moderate rainstorms, inundating Pacific Way, stranding residents and hindering access to Muir Beach.

The current conditions also present a risk of Redwood Creek abandoning its existing channel and spilling onto the adjacent lower Green Gulch fields, leaving fish with no passage back to the main channel. This could be detrimental to adult and juvenile

coho salmon and steelhead that move through the lower creek and also have negative consequences for Pacific Way.



Pacific Way flooded.



Flooded levee road.

Map of Project Site



Temporary Traffic Delays

Work at the Pacific Way site will begin on or around August 26, 2002 and is expected to take three to six weeks to complete, working Monday through Friday.

During the project, Pacific Way will remain open to the greatest extent possible. However, congestion and construction in Redwood Creek will cause short-term traffic delays on weekdays from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. which may affect access to private homes and the public beach. All roads will be fully accessible on weekends. At any time during construction there may be

dump trucks, excavators, and front-end loaders on Pacific Way and Highway 1. A flagperson will be on site to direct traffic; however, vehicles should be prepared to wait while crews clear equipment from the roadway.

Construction crews will also work along Lagoon Drive, the levee road, and the seasonal trail to the beach. The beach will remain open and accessible via the year-round trail over the pedestrian bridge (at the southern end of the parking lot).

Natural Resources

Redwood Creek provides habitat for many wetland and riparian species, including the threatened coho salmon, steelhead, and California red-legged frog. The NPS has consulted with regulatory agencies such as the National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Regional Water Quality Control Board to identify ways to protect fish and other aquatic species in the lower creek during construction. All recommendations are being implemented to ensure that adverse effects on these

species are minimized. In addition, recommendations from Point Reyes Bird Observatory were incorporated into the project to protect songbird habitat.

The NPS has scheduled construction activities to occur between August 15 and October 1. This timeline was established to ensure the project occurred between bird-nesting season and salmon migration. The project schedule also coincides with a low water period in Redwood Creek.

Future Planning

The GGNRA is developing a comprehensive restoration plan for lower Redwood Creek and Big Lagoon. Once implemented, the restoration will improve ecosystem conditions in the lower creek

and address long-term flooding at Pacific Way. Implementation of the comprehensive restoration project is expected to begin in three to five years.

For More Information

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